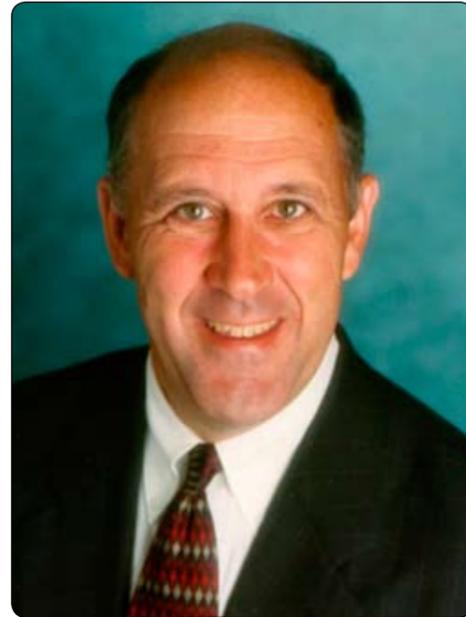


Preface



From downtown Milwaukee to the deep forests of Douglas County, Wisconsin is a remarkably diverse state—ecologically, socially, and economically. While this diversity is one of our greatest strengths, Wisconsinites share many similar aspirations. We want a healthy environment and a vibrant economy. We want clean water and air, fertile fields and plentiful forests. We want dynamic cultural centers as well as quiet places to reflect. We may approach these issues from differing perspectives and envision different solutions, but we share a common desire—across generations, cultures, and areas of the state—to capitalize on our tremendous natural resources responsibly while we grow a sustainable economy.

What you hold in your hands is a comprehensive inventory of the special places that will be critical to meet future conservation and outdoor recreation needs—a “greenprint” of opportunities. It’s a big and beautiful book containing an enormous amount of information, much of which citizens across the state helped to assemble. Despite its size, it’s not intended to sit on a shelf. Rather, I hope you will use it in many different ways. Throw it in your car as you explore the state. Bring it to public meetings. Encourage your kids to read it at the kitchen table.

Discover how your roots, whether freshly planted or generations old, relate to the rest of the state. Use it as a starting point in talks with your neighbors to help shape your vision for the state. Those who had a hand in putting this report together over the past three years will be most satisfied if, 50 years from now, the only copies remaining are dog-eared, coffee-stained, and worn.

You also hold in your hands, figuratively speaking, something far more important—the Wisconsin we will pass on to our children and grandchildren. Our collective decisions, whether we live in rural or urban areas, in the north or the south, will directly influence the quality of the lands and waters that future generations inherit. We are today’s stewards of this wonderful place called Wisconsin and with this comes a great responsibility. May we rise to the occasion as we pass on our land legacy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Doyle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "D".

Governor Jim Doyle